

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20560

April 2, 1968

Mr. Oscar E. Monnig
29 Chelsea Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76115

Dear Oscar:

I spent several days in Columbus with the group at Battelle and had some interesting discussions about the Tishomingo meteorite. The specimen you last sent was x-rayed and there seems to be an inclusion below the structurless area shown in one of the pictures you have. At least the negatives indicate a small mass of something, with a different density than the NiFe, is located below that point in the meteorite.

Everybody is interested in this martensite structure, so this meteorite is going to be of interest to two groups, those working in metallurgy and to those working with iron meteorites. A lot of meteorites contain the martensite structure but none that I know of are 100 percent martensite and such coarse martensite. Actually the metallurgists tell me they have not seen such coarse martensite.

Is there a chance that we can make a deal with you and the owners whereby the main mass will be sent here with permission to remove a slice from the center. We will purchase the slice and return the two end pieces to you. The section removed should be about 3/4 of an inch in thickness.

The fact that we cut the main mass into two pieces will not harm the specimen, actually, it will increase the interest in this meteorite. Even if we acquire such a slice we would still be eager to purchase the entire mass or either of the two end masses. Thus, we can assure the owners that we are not hurting their investment.

The fact that there will be two portions may make it easier for you to acquire one of them at this time. We will make the check for the purchase of the slice, payable to who ever we are instructed to. All transportation costs will be paid by the Smithsonian and there will be no charges made for the cutting.

Please make it clear to the owner that already a lot of time and work has gone into this study and we feel it is important to get this additional section for some urgent studies.

Please do not think about this until you are relaxed and in a good mood because it is important to get a yes answer on this.

I want to get one special picture made showing the structures in the last specimen we cut. We need to picture the entire area then blow it up so we can easily see the structure. Alteration has penetrated certain of these martensite bands much faster than others. It may be the twin bands alter faster than the others. When this picture is finished we will be in a position to send the meteorite back for your tender care. If I could hold it until you manage to make the visit to Washington, we would be pleased to do so and make that visit soon.

Thanks for making it possible to see the inside of this last specimen.

With kindest regards, I remain,

Cordially yours,



E. P. Henderson
Curator Emeritus
Division of Meteorites